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Christie Whelan Browne

Christine Whelan Browne (born 6 August 1982) is an Australian performer who has worked extensively in musical theatre as an actress, dancer and singer. She has also appeared on television shows and in films. In March 2012, she married fellow performer, Rohan Browne.

Christie Whelan Browne

Whelan Browne at the 2015 Helpmann Awards

Born	Christine Whelan 6 August 1982 Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
Education	St Helena Secondary College
Occupation	Actress
Years active	2005–present
Spouse	Rohan Browne (m. 2012)

Early years

Christie Whelan Browne was born as Christine Whelan on 6 August 1982 in Melbourne.[1][2] She grew up in the suburb of Eltham, and attended St Helena Secondary College.[3][4] Whelan performed in school musicals every year from Year 7.[3][4] The musicals included, "*The King and I* and doing everything from *Fiddler on the Roof* to *Little Shop of Horrors*, as well as *Grease*."[5] She later reflected on her Year 12 school production, "I was choreographing and playing a part. It was the first time I realised this was something that came naturally to me. It is the only thing that was born in me."[4] The Whelan family were fervent basketballers.[4][6]

Whelan's first amateur theatre role was in *Les Misérables*, followed by works with the Catchment Players and then as Roxie in *Chicago*.[4][5] She recalled being inspired by seeing *Mamma Mia!*, "At the end the audience stood up and everyone was singing – I just thought this would be the best thing ever but I didn't think 'that'll be me one day'."[5] A talent manager caught her performance in *Chicago* and recommend she turn professional.[3][4] Whelan Browne acknowledged her teachers, "Susan Anne Walker and Rosie Harris for singing, I danced at Bev Palmer's for a couple of years when I was younger and more recently have been doing some TV and film courses around Melbourne and Sydney."[4] In the early 2000s, she contracted glandular fever, which resulted in chronic fatigue syndrome, "I think with hindsight I hadn't found my place in the world and I didn't know what life was going to look like and actually, just as I was recovering, I was cast in *Grease*."[5]

Career

Whelan Browne's professional career began in 2005 in *Grease: The Arena Spectacular*, playing the role of Patti Simcox.[7] She reprised the role in the United Kingdom.[7] In both productions she understudied Sandy's role. On returning to Sydney, she portrayed April in Gale Edwards's production of *Company* from June to August 2007 at Theatre Royal.[8] Due to illness, Whelan missed the 18 July performance, and with no understudy available, Peter Cousens of Kookaburra Musical Theatre decided the production would continue with "key songs, scenes and dialogue" removed.[9] Despite criticism of *Company*, and Cousens, in 2008 Whelan received the Sydney Theatre Award for Best Newcomer for her role in *Company*.[10][11]

The actress provided a one-woman performance in *'Tegrity: Britney Spears Live in Cabaret* in the titular role, which began at the Adelaide Cabaret Festival (June 2009) and continued, as *Britney Spears: the Cabaret*, in Sydney (October 2009) and Melbourne (October 2010).[12][13] The show was co-written by Mathew Frank and Dean Bryant.[13] According to Andrew Stephens of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, it is "her first big hit. That's little wonder, given it is a searing and unexpectedly compassionate work."[13] In subsequent years, *Britney Spears: the Cabaret* was toured around Australia annually until 2019.[13][14][15] She played the role of Lucy in Bryant and Frank's Australian musical *Once We Lived Here*, in September 2009 for which she was nominated for the Green Room Award for Female Actor in a Featured Role (Music Theatre).[16] Other credits include Maisy in *The Boy Friend* (2009), as well as chorus member in *42nd Street* (2007) and various characters in *Starting Here, Starting Now* (June–July 2010). Her debut film role was a brief appearance as "Woman Runner" in the romantic comedy, *I Love You Too* (May 2010).[17][18]

Whelan appeared in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (January–February 2010) for Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC) as Janet van de Graaf,[3] for which she was a nominated for a Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Musical. The lead role of Man in the Chair was portrayed by Geoffrey Rush, while Whelan's then-boyfriend Rohan Browne took the role of George.[4][19] She played the title role in The Production Company's *Sugar* (September–October 2010), for which she was a Green Room Award nominee for Best Actress.[3] *Sugar* is based on the 1959 film, *Some Like It Hot*, with Marilyn Monroe as Sugar "Kane" Kowalczyk.[3][4] Whelan took the lead role of Clio/Kira in the musical, *Xanadu* (March 2011), which had her roller skating in a big top tent.[20][21] She obtained the sought-after role over fellow actress/singer contenders, Natalie Bassingthwaighte, Ricki-Lee Coulter, Erika Heynatz, Margot Robbie and Holly Valance.[22] She followed with the role of Erma in *Anything Goes* (July 2011).[23]

Whelan Browne was a guest panellist on an episode of *Spicks and Specks* in June 2011 on ABC Television[24] and on TV talk show, *The Circle*. She undertook the role of Kylie McDonald in the episode "Covert Aggression in Netball" of TV series *Winners & Losers* (March 2011).[25][26] She appeared in *Offspring* Season 2, Episode 11 "Complications" (July 2011) as Jenny.[27] Other TV credits include Leila Esperance in *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries* (March 2012) and Katarina in *Conspiracy 365* (December 2012).[28][29][30] She played Gwendolen in *The Importance of Being Earnest* (November 2011–January 2012) for MTC.[31] Cameron Woodhead of *The Sydney Morning Herald* felt despite the presence of Rush in the production, Whelan's "piping Gwendolyn steals the

show, from the subtle subversions of her flirting behind her mother's back, to the ritualised cattiness of her scene with Cecily" (portrayed by Emily Barclay).[31]

She played Philia in the Melbourne season of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (October 2012) opposite Rush for which she was nominated for a Green Room Award for Best Supporting Actress.[32] Whelan Browne starred in Eddie Perfect's updated version of *Shane Warne: The Musical* as Elizabeth Hurley for five shows at the Adelaide Cabaret Festival and two shows at Melbourne's Hamer Hall in June 2013.[33] The actress portrayed Lina Lamont opposite Browne as Don Lockwood in *Singin' in the Rain* in August for The Production Company at the State Theatre, Melbourne.[34] Also in that year, she hosted the Helpmann Awards alongside Perfect, held at the Sydney Opera House.[35] On TV she had an arc of four episodes in Network Ten's drama series *Wonderland* as Kristen.[36]

In 2014, Whelan Browne took the role of Janet Weiss in the 40th anniversary tour of *The Rocky Horror Show*.[37][38] Lead actor Craig McLachlan portrayed Frank-N-Furter, reprising his role from 1992 Australian production.[38][39] In 2015, she played the role of Olivia Newton-John in the TV miniseries, *Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door* on the Seven Network.[40] The actress provided a cameo in *House Husbands* as an inappropriate dance teacher. She starred in another one-woman show *Pure Blonde*, written by Bryant and Frank, which played at the 2015 Adelaide Cabaret Festival.[41] Her portrayal of Eileen Evergreen in The Production Company's *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (August 2015) was described by Katie Purvis of *AussieTheatre.com* as displaying, "considerable comic chops."[42][43]

Whelan Browne appeared in the first season of *The Wrong Girl* (September–November 2016) as Nikkii Steadman for Network 10.[44] She portrayed Sacha in another romantic comedy film, *Spin Out* (September 2016); alongside Lincoln Lewis.[45][46] Greg King's review of *Spin Out* determined, "[Whelan Browne and Lewis] are wasted in thankless roles as a couple of city slickers who rock up to the ute muster looking for a bit of excitement, and find themselves bemused by some of the bizarre rituals at play here. But their characters mainly exist to draw some humour out of the old city versus country rivalry."[46] She portrayed one of the Pigeon sisters in MTC's production of *The Odd Couple*.[47][48] from November 2016, and as Billie Dawn in its 2017 production of *Born Yesterday*.[49] In 2018, she played Olivia in Simon Phillips' production of Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* at the MTC.[50] In both 2020 and 2021 she played Rosalind in *As You Like It* at the MTC with Phillips directing.[51] In 2018, Whelan Browne appeared as herself in the comedy film *That's Not My Dog!*. Whelan Browne joined the cast of *Neighbours* as Scarlett Brady in June 2019, which was broadcast in September.[52] She reprised the role the following year.[53] The actress joined the ensemble cast of the comedy news television program *Shaun Micallef's Mad as Hell* in 2019, and continued with the show in 2020 and 2021. She also appeared in the 2020 web series *Loving Captivity*.

In 2023, it was announced that Whelan Browne would be participating in the twentieth series of *Dancing with the Stars*. She was paired with Craig Monley.

Personal life

Whelan and her then-boyfriend Rohan Browne first appeared on stage together in *The Drowsy Chaperone* from January 2010.[4][19] In March 2012, Whelan and Browne married and she changed her surname to Whelan Browne.[54] In July of that year they performed together at The Production Company's *The Producers*, in which she played Ulla opposite Browne's Carmen Ghia.[4] The couple have a child.[6]

In January 2018, Whelan Browne, Erika Heynatz and Angela Scundi made allegations of indecent assault by McLachlan during the 2014 production of *The Rocky Horror Show*.[38][55] At the end of the subsequent criminal trial, in December 2020, McLachlan was found not guilty of all charges.[55] McLachlan had filed defamation suits against Whelan Browne and the reporting media (Australian Broadcasting Corporation and Fairfax Media) in February 2018.[56] However, the trial for these suits was postponed pending the related criminal trial,[57] in October 2021 the presiding judge announced the defamation trial was expected in April 2022 or later.[58] In May 2022, McLachlan dropped the suit.[59] In September 2023 Whelan Browne sued Oldfield Entertainment, the company that employed her on *The Rocky Horror Show*, claiming she was sexually harassed and sexually discriminated against.[60]

Filmography

Title	Year	Role	Notes	Ref.
I Love You Too	2010	Woman Runner	Debut film role	[18]
Winners & Losers	2011	Kylie McDonald	Season 1, episode 1: "Covert Aggression in Netball"	[25]
Offspring	2011	Jenny	Season 2, episode 11: "Complications"	[27]
Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries	2012	Leila Esperance	Season 1, episode 6: "Ruddy Gore"	[28]
Conspiracy 365	2012	Katarina	Three episodes: "February", "June", "December"	[29]
Paper Giants: Magazine Wars	2013	Tracy	TV miniseries	
INXS: Never Tear Us Apart	2014	Shelley Blanks	TV miniseries	[7]
Peter Allen: Not the Boy Next Door	2015	Olivia Newton-John	TV miniseries	[40]
House Husbands	2015	Miss Karley	Series 4, episode 4	[61]
The Wrong Girl	2016	Nikkii Steadman	Season 1, 8 episodes	[44]
Spin Out	2016	Sacha		[46]
That's Not My Dog!	2018	Herself		[62]
Neighbours	2019–2020	Scarlett Brady	36 episodes	[52] [53]
Shaun Micallef's Mad as Hell	2019–2022	various characters	50 episodes	[63] [64]
Loving Captivity	2020	Ally	Web series	[65]
Spreadsheet	2021	Nancy	5 episodes	[66]
Colin from Accounts	2022	Belinda	1 episode	

Theatre roles

Title	Year	Role	Notes	Ref.
Grease: The Arena Spectacular	2005	Patty Simcox	Debut role	[7][67]
Company	2007	April	Sydney Theatre Award for Best Newcomer	[8][11]
42nd Street	2007	Chorus member		[68]
'Tegrity: Britney Spears Live in Cabaret	2009	Britney Spears	One-woman show	[11] [69]
The Boy Friend	2009	Maisie		[70]
Once We Lived Here	2009	Lucy	World premiere	[71] [72]
Light the Night	2009	Soloist		[73]
Starting Here, Starting Now	2010	Various characters		[74] [75]
The Drowsy Chaperone	2010	Janet van de Graaf	Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor in a Musical nominee	[19]
Hats Off 2010	2010	The Divine Sisters	Benefit concert	[76] [77]
Sugar	2010	Sugar Kane		[4][78]
OzMade Musicals 2010	2010	Actor		[79]
Xanadu	2011	Clio/Kira	Roller skating in a big top tent	[80] [81]
Anything Goes	2011	Erma		[82]
The Importance of Being Earnest	2011	Gwendolen		[83]
The Producers	2012	Ulla		[84]
A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum	2012	Philia		[85]
Shane Warne: The Musical	2013	Elizabeth Hurley	New role for updated version	[33]
Singin' in the Rain	2013	Lina Lamont		[34] [86]
The Rocky Horror Show	2014	Janet Weiss	40th anniversary tour	[37]
Pure Blonde	2015	various characters	One-woman show	[87] [88]
Nice Work If You Can Get It	2015	Eileen Evergreen		[42] [89]
Jerry's Girls	2015	Herself		[90]
The Beast	2016	Gen		[91]
The Odd Couple	2016	Pigeon sister		[47]

Title	Year	Role	Notes	Ref.
Born Yesterday	2017	Billie Dawn		[92]
Vigil	2017	Herself		[93]
Muriel's Wedding the Musical	2017	Tania Degano		[94] [95]
An Ideal Husband	2018	Mrs Cheveley		[96] [97]
Twelfth Night	2018	Olivia		[50] [98]
Muriel's Wedding the Musical	2019	Tania Degano		[99]
As You Like It	2020 and 2021	Rosalind		[100]

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- Christie Whelan Browne (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm4180607/) at IMDb

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